

Lewis And Wilkins in Indianapolis. Indianapolis Monthly characterized Paul last month as a long-time supporter of the city's art community. Kathryn's paternal grandparents are Pat and Val Mullin, retired, and residents of Nashville, Indiana. Pat had a career in sales and Val was a high school English teacher. Kathryn's maternal great-grandfather, Charles Richard Paul, 96 years old, originally from Evansville, is still an active stockbroker and will be teaching Kathryn the importance of trading with puts and calls starting in a few years. Although she does not realize it yet, Kathryn's best friend is Noor, the family dog. I congratulate the entire Mullin family on the birth of Kathryn and wish her a long, happy life.

SALVADORAN ARCHBISHOP
OSCAR ROMERO: A SAINT FOR
ALL OF US

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2018

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, October 14, the Vatican officially canonized Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero, who was assassinated on March 24, 1980, on the eve of El Salvador's 12-year civil war.

In a ceremony presided over by Pope Francis, the first pope from Latin America, Romero will become a saint alongside Pope Paul VI, Italian priests Francesco Spinelli and Vincenzo Romano, German nun Maria Caterina Kasper, and Spanish nun Nazaria Ignazia. The canonizations will take place at the Vatican during the 2018 Synod of Bishops, a meeting of bishops from around the world that this year will address the topic of young people, who were much beloved by Archbishop Romero.

In attendance will be many Salvadorans and Latin Americans, including a delegation from the United States who are current beneficiaries of Temporary Protected Status (TPS), an immigration status, which President Trump has stripped from over 260,000 Salvadorans currently residing legally in the United States because it's simply too dangerous for them to return home.

In May 2015, I had the privilege of attending the beatification of Romero in San Salvador. Surrounded by many high religious and government officials, especially from Latin America, I was most moved by the hundreds of thousands of ordinary Salvadorans, many who had traveled for days from rural areas to attend this special mass. While they likely would have preferred to see him canonized in his home country, they can only be overjoyed that the name and message of "Saint Romero of the Americas" will now be shared with the world.

As a Catholic, I am proud of my Church for finally recognizing this man of God who lived his faith. As a politician, I continue to be inspired by Romero's example—his total commitment to the poor and his unwavering commitment to the dignity of every human being.

Romero was shot through the heart by a sniper while celebrating mass in the chapel of the Hospital of Divine Providence, a church-run hospital in San Salvador specializing in cancer and care of the terminally ill, which still

operates today and maintains as a shrine the humble dwelling where Romero resided on their grounds.

He was murdered the day after he called on the Salvadoran military to stop killing innocent civilians at the beginning of El Salvador's civil war. The U.N. Truth Commission, created as part of the negotiations that ended that war, determined that Roberto D'Aubuisson, a former army major and founder of the right-wing ARENA political party, coordinated a death squad and ordered the assassination.

Romero's calls to end the violence afflicting his nation and his solidarity with El Salvador's poor appealed to me as a college student in the late 1970s. I still remember learning about his murder and believing that this terrible crime would result in the termination of U.S. aid to a government and military that persecuted social justice activists and had no respect for human rights. Sadly, it did not.

The U.S. continued to finance the Salvadoran armed forces for the next decade. While Congress expressed concern about human rights issues, it wasn't until Congressman Joe Moakley courageously offered and Congress passed an amendment in 1990 to cut aid that the blank check stopped. And that was after the deaths of nearly 80,000 civilians, the murder of human rights defenders, labor leaders, nuns and then six Jesuit priests and two women in 1989. I traveled to El Salvador many times during the 1980s and saw firsthand the brutality of the Salvadoran government and military supported by my government. I felt ashamed.

Reagan and Bush Administration officials routinely turned a blind eye to torture, disappearances and murder. They characterized anyone who questioned the human rights record of the Salvadoran government as an ally of the Faribundo Marti National Liberation Army (FMLN)—the armed opposition. They belittled and tried to discredit those—like Romero and the Jesuits—who dared to speak the truth.

For Romero, the truth about El Salvador came later in his life, as he rose in the Church hierarchy. In the mid-1970s, he served as bishop of the rural diocese of Santiago de Maria, where the gap between coffee plantation and other landowners and campesinos was obvious. He saw for himself the suffering and cruel repression of the poor, which affected him deeply and triggered a process of reflection and change. This process culminated in the 1977 assassination of his close friend, Jesuit priest Rutilio Grande, who embraced liberation theology, which puts the poor and the oppressed first and prioritizes the concrete defense of their rights. After Grande's murder, Romero said, "When I look at Rutilio lying dead I thought, 'If they have killed him for doing what he did, then I, too, have to walk the same path.'" Indeed, Romero believed "those committed to the poor must share the same fate as the poor."

Romero became a voice for those who had no voice; he preached that everyone was important. He embodied hope for the millions of people in El Salvador who were forgotten and the targets of repression. In his diaries, he wrote: "Between the powerful and the wealthy, and the poor and vulnerable, who should a pastor side with? I have no doubts. A pastor should stay with his people."

To his dying day, Archbishop Romero called on us to unite in love for the poor, the

marginalized and the forgotten. The ceremony this weekend will finally recognize him as a saint. It offers all of us an opportunity not only to reflect on Romero's life, but also to commit ourselves to policies aimed at peace, human rights, alleviating poverty and promoting non-violence in El Salvador and around the world.

The sad fact is that El Salvador and the international community have largely failed in transforming Romero's words into action. We continue to witness thousands of young children and families fleeing Central American countries as a result of violence and extreme poverty. Even in the United States, the gap between the rich and the poor continues to grow and justice on too many occasions fails to work for those who are most disadvantaged. Hundreds of millions around the world are hungry—even though hunger is a solvable problem; and war and violence too often seem to be the first choice to deal with conflicts.

I am hopeful that the power of Romero's message can inspire new activism on behalf of the marginalized and the poor and a better understanding of their plight and struggles—in El Salvador, the United States and around the world. Romero reminded us, "There are many things that can only be seen through eyes that have cried." With his canonization, we have an opportunity to renew our commitment and honor his legacy by giving a voice to the persecuted, the poor and neglected in every nation. Now is the time to stand on the right side of history and help those who need it most.

HONORING SALLY SERGER WITH
CALIFORNIA'S THIRD DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2018

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sally Serger as a woman of the year. As a dedicated educator who is passionate about her family and community, Ms. Sally Serger has devoted over 25 years of her life to teaching deaf and hard-of-hearing special-needs children in Oroville for the Sutter County Office of Education. With her persistence and positivity, she has been able to touch the lives of countless children who otherwise might not receive the patient care and instruction so critical to their development. It is a point of pride for Ms. Serger when she has the opportunity to interact with the students who she has seen grow into successful young adults throughout her career. Ms. Serger also spends time volunteering in myriad other capacities throughout her community. She is a member of the California Women for Agriculture, the La Porte Snowmobile Club, and has served for over 30 years as a project and community leader for the renowned 4-H Program. When one considers that 4-H seeks to engage youth in reaching their fullest potential, it is no surprise to learn that Ms. Serger has chosen to spend her time with this organization. In addition to her work as an educator, Ms. Serger has been a consistent force in improving the western bank of the Feather River, and by diligently advocating for her community, she became instrumental in securing local funding for the strengthening of Sutter